

DON'T DESTROY THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHILE TRYING TO IMPROVE IT

(Mr. BONNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, last week one Republican after another asked a very simple yet relevant question to the House Democratic leadership: Where are the jobs that you and the President promised almost 6 months ago when you passed that gigantic \$787 billion stimulus bill?

You see, the answer to that question is important if the American people are to have any confidence in the Democrats, who not only run the House but are now in control of this entire city, when they boldly promise a new government Federal health plan costing \$1.6 trillion, financed by \$818 billion in new taxes on individuals and small businesses; and at the end of the day, all that new spending and all those new taxes are only going to just create more debt and more concern.

Mr. Speaker, the American people know better; and they have genuine concern about what they're seeing come out of their Federal Government. Republicans know our health care system needs repair. We just don't want to see it destroyed all in the name of making it better.

TRANSPORTATION SPENDING WILL CREATE JOBS

(Mr. ARCURI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, we certainly can appreciate the passion on both sides of the aisle with respect to health care. This House has not debated a bill of this importance in many years. But one thing that we can't forget is that we need to continue to focus on transportation. We have before us right now a surface transportation authorization bill that must be reauthorized by the House of Representatives. We have bridges that are collapsing throughout the country. We have roads that are deteriorating. I hear my colleague from the other side of the aisle say, Where are the jobs? The jobs are out there now from the stimulus bill where money was given to the States, and they're repairing the roads, and they're fixing the bridges. We need to continue that.

There is no better way to create jobs and no better way to keep our infrastructure the best in the world than to spend money through transportation. I strongly urge my colleagues to continue to work on reauthorization of the surface transportation bill.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH SHOULD APPLY TO ALL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of freedom of speech. Democrats are telling Republicans that we are no longer allowed to use the words "government-run health care" in communication with our constituents. Yes, that's correct. Republicans will be forced to use only Democrat-approved language when describing their attempted government takeover of health care to our constituents, or else.

Democrats told Republicans that if we do not use the words Democrats give us to describe their health care reform bill, then Members will have to pay the postage personally. Apparently, the Democrats feel they can control what the public thinks about their bill by dictating how we talk about it. I know America is smarter than that.

Call the Speaker at 202-224-3121 if you think this censorship should stop. The last time I checked, this was still America where freedom of speech is our hallmark.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

PUBLIC HEALTH CARE WILL COMPETE WITH PRIVATE PLANS

(Ms. DEGETTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, anybody who says that we don't need to reform our health care system is ignoring the fact that we have the most expensive health care system in the world, but we have some of the worst results among industrialized nations.

We have one of the worst results in maternal and child safety. We have one of the worst results in infant mortality. Yet at the same time, our costs continue to go up. Health care premiums doubled in 9 years, growing faster than wages. Health care costs are the leading cause of bankruptcy in the United States right now; and in the next 10 years, \$1 out of every \$5 will be spent on health care.

The bill that we are looking at in Energy and Commerce is a good bill. It allows people who like their health plans to keep them; but it also puts forward a public option that will compete with those plans, not government-run health care but it takes the insurance companies' profit margin out of it and makes them compete on behalf of the American people. We need to pass health care now.

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REPUBLICANS PROPOSE A BETTER HEALTH PLAN

(Mr. McCLINTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, in order to support the Democrats' health care plan we are asked to accept three arguments that are fundamentally absurd. First, that the same government that pioneered \$400 hammers and \$600 toilet seats is somehow going to control our health care costs. Second, that the same government that runs FEMA is going to make our health care system more efficient and responsive. And third, that the same government that runs the IRS is going to make our health care more compassionate and understanding. Frankly, I doubt it.

Instead of putting government in charge of our health care decisions, let's put patients back in charge. We can do that by using tax credits to bring within the reach of every family a basic health plan that they can choose, that they can own, and that they can change if it fails to meet their needs. That is what the Republicans are proposing, and it is a much better way.

WILL WE ACT OR WILL WE NOT?

(Mr. BOCCIERI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOCCIERI. Mr. Speaker, a fine Republican President, Teddy Roosevelt, said, "The worst thing you can do in a moment of decision is nothing." And we are charged with measures of action or inaction. That is why the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was about investing in our people, in our country, in our roads, our bridges, our schools, and they are already starting to show the difference.

I see signs all over my district saying "This job was created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act." And I must say that we have sent billions of dollars overseas to build brand new Iraqi roads, Iraqi schools and Iraqi buildings, but it is time to invest in our people.

Will we put America back to work? Will we delay or make a difference? Will we lead or will we block? Will we invest in our country, in our people, our way of life, or we will send that money overseas? We have the decision. Will we act or will we not?

OPPOSING GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF HEALTH CARE

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I heard from a small agribusiness owner in my district. His business is growing, and he actually wants to hire new employees. However, he is concerned the new mandates and taxes imposed on him as an employer by the government's takeover of health care would mean he wouldn't be able to create new positions. He is not the only small business owner concerned about